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UNCLAS OTTAWA 000394

SIPDIS

BRUSSELS FOR USEU, STATE FOR OES/ENV JOHN THOMPSON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [AORC](#) [ETRD](#) [PREL](#) [CA](#)

SUBJECT: DEMARCHE REQUEST ON MERCURY ISSUE AT UNEP  
GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING

REF: SECSTATE 18970

1. ESTH Counselor made the demarche requested in reftel to Environment Canada (EC) and Foreign Affairs Canada (FAC). Nancy Hamzawi, Director, International Affairs, EC, told us that Canada looks at the US proposal for partnerships on mercury very favorably, but is unable at this time to give any definite response until resource questions have been clarified in the government's budget. That budget is now scheduled to be presented on February 23, right during the middle of the UNEP Governing Council meeting in Nairobi.

2. Hamzawi said that the GOC hopes to do something fairly substantive to further partnerships on mercury in the UNEP context. She characterized the GOC as being averse to a legally binding instrument as favored by some European countries, favoring the "quick action" possible in a partnership framework to "endless negotiations" on a legally binding agreement.

3. The GOC delegation will reportedly be led by EC Director General for International Affairs, Nicole Ladouceur, and will include Hamzawi, two officials from FAC and one from Natural Resources Canada.

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